

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-07

NSAE-00 PA-01 USIA-06 PRS-01 SP-02 PM-05 NSC-05

SS-15 ACDA-07 /086 W

-----064488 122001Z /73

P 121645Z SEP 77

FM USINT HAVANA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 76

INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L HAVANA 0085

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR ET SO AO CU

SUBJ: CUBAN VISIT TO ETHIOPIA

1. SOMALI AMBASSADOR YUSEF HASSAN IBRAHIM TOLD USINT OFFICER, SEPTEMBER 10, THAT SOMALIS HAD NOT BEEN INFORMED IN ADVANCE OF DEPARTURE FOR ETHIOPIA, SEPTEMBER 8, OF CUBAN DELEGATION HEADED BY RAUL VALDES VIVO, CHIEF OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS DEPARTMENT OF CUBAN CP CENTRAL COMMITTEE. TRAVELING WITH VALDES WAS CALUDIO RAMOS, CHIEF OF AFRICA AND MIDDLE EAST SECTION OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS DEPARTMENT, AND ALBERTO VELZSCO, MINREX DEPUTY DIRECTOR FOR AFRICA AND THE MIDDLE EAST, OSTENSIBLE PURPOSE OF CUBAN TRIP IS ATTENDANCE AT CELEBRATION OF THIRD ANNIVERSARY OF ETHIOPIAN REVOLUTION. SOMALI AMBASSADOR, HOWEVER, VIEWED LEVEL OF TRIP AS SIGNIFICANT SIGNAL AT TIME OF BREAK OF ETHIOPIAN-SOMALI RELATIONS AND POSSIBLE ERUPTION OF FULL-SCALE SOMALI-ETHIOPIAN WAR.

2. IBRAHIM SAID THAT HE HAD HEARD RUMORS, BUT HAD NO HARD INFORMATION, THAT CUBANS WERE PLANNING TO ESCALATE MILITARY PARTICIPATION IN ETHIOPIA. HE SAID, HOWEVER, THAT PRESS ESTIMATES OF CURRENT PRESENCE OF 1500 CUBANS IN ETHIOPIA WERE CONSIDERABLY EXAGGERATED.

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3. IBRAHIM SAID THAT CUBAN CP CENTRAL COMMITTEE STAFF HAD HELD SEVERAL CONVERSATIONS WITH HIM SHORTLY AFTER CASTRO'S UNSUCCESSFUL EFFORT TO MEDIATE BETWEEN SOMALIA AND ETHIOPIA. IN LIGHT OF SOMALI REITERATION OF TERRITORIAL CLAIMS, HOWEVER, CUBANS HAD CEASED MEDIATION EFFORTS IN HAVANA. AFTER FAILURE OF MEDIATION ATTEMPT, CUBANS HAD NOT THREATENED TO CUT OFF ASSISTANCE TO, OR TO TAKE ANY

OTHER ACTION AGAINST, SOMALIA. SOMALI CONTACTS IN CUBAN CENTRAL COMMITTEE APPARATUS HAD STATED, HOWEVER, THAT CUBA VIEWED ETHIOPIA AS SOCIALIST STATE AND WOULD PROVIDE (UNSPECIFIED) ASSISTANCE, IF ASKED.

4. IBRAHIM INDICATED, AS AN ASIDE, THAT ONE CURRENT RUMOR ON DIPLOMATIC CURCUIT HERE IS THAT RECENT NETO VISIT TO CUBA (AUGUST 26-29) WAS PROMPTED BY CASTRO DECISION TO SHIFT TROOPS FROM ANGOLA TO ETHIOPIA. IBRAHIM STATED THAT HE HAD NO RPT NO REASON TO BELIEVE THIS RUMOR WAS CORRECT.

5. USINT IS SEEKING INTERVIEW WITH MINREX AFRICAN DIVISION PERSONNEL FOR RUNDOWN ON HORN AND OTHER DEVELOPMENTS. LANE

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